



U.S. Department of Justice  
United States Attorney  
District of Kansas

## NEWS RELEASE

Eric Melgren, U.S. Attorney

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### TOPEKA, KANSAS, MAN SENTENCED FOR MAKING FALSE STATEMENTS TO OBTAIN RENTAL SUBSIDIES AND FOOD STAMPS

TOPEKA, Kan. – United States Attorney Eric Melgren announced that **Verel Tracy Westover, Sr.**, 64, Topeka, Kansas, was sentenced today by U.S. District Judge Sam A. Crow to twelve months plus one day in federal prison, without parole, to be followed by two years of supervised release, and ordered to pay \$15,200.79 in restitution.

Melgren said that Westover was found guilty on January 28, 2003, following a five day jury trial of four counts of making false statements to the United States and one count of embezzling money from the United States.

Melgren said that according to court testimony, from May 1998 through July 2001 Westover was involved in a scheme to obtain rental subsidies from the Department of Housing and Urban Development and food stamps from Department of Agriculture Food Stamp Program by submitting false statements claiming that he was not employed. According to court testimony, Westover received rental subsidies and food stamps when he was actually employed as a truck driver and did not qualify for these programs. Further, Westover provided a false statement for purposes of determining his eligibility to participate in the public housing program in May 1998 stating that he had only one prior felony offense when he knew he had at least three prior felony offenses.

Melgren commended the excellent work of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Inspector General and the Social Security Administration, Office of Inspector General, in this investigation.